



STATE OF CONNECTICUT • COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

BOARD OF FINANCE

ROBERT K. PAGANI
Chairman

BUDGET HEARING TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2006

RICHARD J. CLEARY
ROBERT J. CLEMENTS
MARK A. JOYSE
BARRY C. PINTO
ALBERT S. WACHSMAN

Members Present: Robert Pagani-Chairman, Robert Clements, Mark Joyse, Barry Pinto and Albert Wachsmann

Members Absent: Richard Cleary

Others Present: N. DiCorleto-Fin Off, G. Daigle-Bud Advisory, M. Stupinski-First Sel, P. Charter, L. Miller, J. Prichard, N. Way-Board of Sel, P. Michaud-DPW Dir, Sgt. W. Konieny, Hartford Courant and Journal Inquirer Reporters.

Chairman Robert Pagani opened the meeting at 7:47 pm.

The chairman stated that the objective this year would be to hold the line on services and replace deferred items from prior years. Increases in services would probably be last on the priority list.

Board of Selectmen's Budget

Mr. Stupinski presented the budget. The dept heads have included a 3.25 % salary increase per union contracts. The First Selectman's budget increased 10% over last year partly due to Marie Sauve being changed to full time from part time. The increase in salary for First Selectmen as approved earlier this year is included. The Tax Collector's budget will be adjusted after all the staff changes are completed. The Tax Collector will be retiring and this budget accounts for Brenda Strong being moved to full time and promoted to deputy tax collector. The bottom line should be the same or a reduction. The general government is a 6.1% increase including salaries. The Town Counsel account will include any additional legal work for the plan of development and labor negotiations. Mr. Stupinski stated that it is based on an average. Al Wachsmann asked about the increase in the Town Clerk salary account. Mr. Stupinski feels that the Town Clerk took the wage and salary study into account for her employees, but it has not been implemented. Public Safety, fire protection has increased due to water company rate increases for fire hydrant maintenance. The Building Dept budget increased \$15,000 due in part to the Bldg Official asking for money for part time help to get filing in the vault done and house numbering addressed. Mr. Charter tried to cut this figure by 50% at the Board of Selectmen's budget meeting but there was no 2nd on his motion so it died. Mr. Charter stated that the new computers that the Ambulance Corps will have may help to alleviate this problem.

Public Safety State Troopers budget increase is 6.2%. Al Wachsman asked how the resident trooper program is working. Sgt. Konieczny stated that the Town is getting very good coverage through the program. The grant of \$31,000 was received to run radar on high traffic streets. Next year they hope to hit the streets that feed the commuter roads. There is a resource officer at the High School who is a retired State Police officer.

Public Works Dept. budget increase is 8.7%. The growth in the Town affects the DPW budget as well as increased fuel costs. This budget includes town aid winter account increase of \$20,000 and engineering and inspections account increase of \$10,000. The Board of Selectmen felt these numbers were too conservative and increased these two line items. A new fee schedule for developers is to be put out to town meeting and hearing in April. If these fees pass, they will become in effect, and be reflected in a revenue account. Mr. Joyse asked about buying streetlights, and Mr. Stupinski stated that the Town had looked into it 4 years ago and decided it was not cost effective. The Board of Selectmen is looking at the CCM electricity purchase program. The Board of Finance needs to ask the Board of Education what the status of the electric consortium is that they were looking into joining. Mr. Michaud feels the Board of Education should be in with the Town for electricity purchases and not break away on their own. Mr. Stupinski felt that the question is, can the First Selectman sign the agreement on behalf of the Board of Education and he thinks the answer is no. Mr. Pagani will look into this and stated that it brings up the subject of combining services, etc., which has been a hurdle in prior years.

Shenipsit Lake Recreation and Crystal Lake Water Monitoring were put back into this budget for \$5,000. Mr. Stupinski attended a Crystal Lake Assoc. meeting, and that meeting, a member of the DEP stated that they are going to fund the monitoring of weeds. Part of the discussion was that the situation at the lake is getting worse. He feels the water needs to be monitored. The lake is the largest natural resource in town, and in comparison, the amount of money being discussed is not unreasonable.

Under Social Services, the increase is in the Municipal Agent account in the amount of \$300. Under Town properties, the Town Hall budget increase is 14% due to utilities. Arbor Commons increase is due to electricity. Under Fixed Charges, social security went down but health insurance is up by 14%. Under Miscellaneous, the increase is \$1,700 for drug and alcohol council, Memorial Day committee is a \$200 change, and there is an increase for primaries and referenda. Tipping fees from CRRRA are down \$1 per ton.

Net budget increase is 4.56%.

Cultural Arts Additional Appropriation

Mr. Stupinski stated that the Cultural Arts Commission came to the Board of Selectmen and proposed that they would try to secure grants from organizations to fund their programs, because at that point they had no budget. This would have made them a grant agency. The Board of Selectmen considered the grant agency request and felt that this was not a proper task for a government run organization. The Selectmen felt that this budget should not have been cut completely, and wanted to keep things going. This additional appropriation was approved by them to be available for the summer season. The members of the Cultural Arts Commission would consider staying if they had something to work with. No individual letters of resignation were received or accepted from members. Regardless, the First Selectman feels that the Town should have a Cultural Arts Commission and if it takes new members, so be it. If no one joins, the money will not be spent.

MOTION (WACHSMAN) SECONDED (CLEMENTS) AND PASSED TO APPROVE AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF \$5,000 FROM UNDESIGNATED GENERAL FUND BALANCE TO CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION BUDGET FOR FY 2005/06.

MOTION (WACHSMAN) SECONDED (CLEMENTS) AND PASSED TO APPROVE AN INCREASE FROM \$7,000 TO \$12,000 FOR FY 2006/07 BUDGET FOR THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION.

Adjournment

MOTION (JOYSE) SECONDED (CLEMENTS) AND PASSED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:15 PM.

Submitted by


Lori Smith, Clerk